

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8949
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CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 0126

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR MOPS SREF PEPR LA VM CB
SUBJECT: VIETNAMESE TROOP PRESENCE AND ACTIVITY IN SOUTHERN LAOS

REF: A 77 VIENTIANE 1055, B 77 VIENTIANE 1301,
C VIENTIANE 0101

1. THE WEST GERMAN CHARGE D'AFFAIRES TOLD US JANUARY 29 THAT THERE WAS A 300 MAN UNIT OF PAVN LOCATED ON THE LPDR'S KHONG ISLAND ADJACENT TO THE LAO-KAMPUCHEAN BORDER AND THAT THERE WERE, BY WEST GERMAN COUNT, A TOTAL OF 9,000 PAVN TROOPS IN THE PAKSE AREA.

2. A LAO SOURCE WHO RECENTLY WORKED IN THE SRV MILITARY CAMP AT SENO IN SAVANNAKHET PROVINCE REPORTED THAT SEVERAL THOUSAND VIETNAMESE TROOPS HAD BEEN DISPATCHED TO KAMPUCHEA SINCE KAMPUCHEA BROKE RELATIONS WITH THE SRV. HE SAID THE TROOPS WERE TRUCKED ALONG THE "SARAVANE TRAIL" (ROUTE 23?).

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3. A GENERALLY RELIABLE LOCAL SOURCE WITH CONTACTS IN ATTOPEU TOLD US JANUARY 29 THAT IN EARLY DECEMBER, A BATTALION OF KAMPUCHEAN TROOPS HAD PURSUED ESCAPING KAMPUCHEAN REFUGEES INTO ATTOPEU PROVINCE. THEY ENCOUNTERED LIGHT RESISTANCE FROM LPLA UNITS IN THE AREA AND WERE EVENTUALLY FORCED BACK ACROSS THE BORDER

BY VIETNAMESE FORCES STATIONED NEAR ATTOPEU CITY.

4. THE SOURCE SAID THAT AN ORDER WAS SENT FROM VIEN-TIANE TO AVOID CONTACT WITH THE KAMPUCHEAN FORCE WHILE IT WAS IN LAOS BUT THAT THE ORDER REACHED LAO FIELD UNITS AFTER THEY HAD BECOME ENGAGED. (THE SOURCE ALSO SAID THAT THERE WERE LARGE NUMBERS OF CHINESE-KAMPUCHEAN REFUGEES IN THE VICINITY OF ATTOPEU CITY WHERE LOCAL LAO AUTHORITIES HAD ORGANIZED THEM INTO PRODUCTION COMMUNITIES.)

5. COMMENT: THE REPORT OF KAMPUCHEAN REFUGEES IN THE ATTOPEU AREA CORRESPONDS TO REPORT REF A, THOUGH INFORMATION REGARDING CHINESE ETHNIC BACKGROUND AND LAO EFFORTS TO ORGANIZE THE REFUGEES IS NEW.

6. THE INTRUSION OF A KAMPUCHEAN MILITARY UNIT INTO LAOS IN THE PURSUIT OF FLEEING REFUGEES IS NEW. REPORT REF B IS THE ONLY OTHER REPORT WE HAVE HEARD OF A LAO-KAMPUCHEAN ENCOUNTER.

7. THE REPORT OF PAVN TROOP MOVEMENTS OUT OF SAVANNAKHET PROVINCE TO SOUTHERN LAOS (PARA 2) EXPANDS UPON REPORTS REF C.
ROBERTS

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NNN

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